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William Shakespeare Hall to Fanny Jones, 2 August 1886

Cossack

Augst 2<sup>nd</sup> 1886

My dear Fanny

Your letter of 7<sup>th</sup> June is duly to hand, I am very glad you wrote me so fully, as it at once put the whole affair mentioned, in mine in a very different light.

You must be aware that you at one end of this vast continent, & we at the other are very likely to have very different ideas on the same subject, & thus either, or both may labor under gross mistakes.

Previous to my dear Brother Henry's death we all here supposed our poor old Aunt to be rich, or nearly so, & since then we heard that she had taken it into her head to leave all her property to some charitable affair, or intended to do so; which would have been alike detrimental not only to Ted, & Amy (who as you say have the *best rights*) but to any other it might concern.

Now hearing then things were so, & that not any of the family (even Ted & your dear mother included) were to be considered, surely you cannot blame me for taking such measures, or making such inquiries as would, perhaps put things in a more favorable position for *some* of the family. I considered Ted's & Amy's claim on Aunt the first & greatest, & then I think your mother should be considered next, & when I particularly wished my ideas not to be made known to our Sidney folk, it was merely that they should not be disturbed, or alarmed unnecessarily, & perhaps, & as it turns out, all for nothing.

I am glad to hear Aunt is not as represented by some of our friends here (viz insane) & sorry she has nothing even worth thinking of making a dispute about. But had property existed, & the case painful as above, there would have been no dispute with our relations, but only with strangers.

Now at this length of time I cannot recall the exact words of my former but this is about what I wished to convey, you must bear in mind that by some mails I have to write many letters & as I keep no copies I cannot remember all I may have written.

Now my dear niece I trust this explanation will put the whole affair right & that it will end where it commenced, with ourselves. With very kind love to you, & kindest regds to your husband.

I am

Your affect Uncle

W S Hall

Write soon & let me know if this puts affairs in a proper light S H

[Addressed to:

Mrs Robert Jones

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Golden Square

Sandhurst

Victoria

Australia]